



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Richard J. Bruckner
Director

May 4, 2010

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**PROJECT NO. 04-075-(5)
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 200900009
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 04-075
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 200900121
OAK TREE PERMIT CASE NO. 200700021
HIGHWAY REALIGNMENT CASE NO. 200900001
VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 060922
APPLICANT: PARDEE HOMES
10880 WILSHIRE BLVD, SUITE 1900
LOS ANGELES, CA 90024
SAND CANYON ZONED DISTRICT
FIFTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT (3-VOTE)**

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

- Consider the Final Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") and Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations ("SOC") for Project No. 04-075-(5), General Plan Amendment Case No. 200900009, Conditional Use Permit Case No. 04-075, Conditional Use Permit Case No. 200900121, Oak Tree Permit Case No. 200700021, Highway Realignment Case No. 200900001, and Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 060922 together with any comments received during the public review process, find on the basis of the whole record before the Board that there is substantial evidence the project will have a significant effect on the environment, find that there are overriding considerations that warrant approval of the project, find that the Final EIR reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Board, and adopt the Final EIR and Findings of Fact and SOC with Mitigation Monitoring Program ("MMP").

- Instruct County Counsel to prepare the necessary documents to approve General Plan Amendment Case No. 200900009, as recommended by the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission (“Commission”).
- Instruct County Counsel to prepare the necessary findings to affirm the Commission’s approval of Conditional Use Permit Case No. 04-075, Conditional Use Permit Case No. 200900121, Oak Tree Permit Case No. 200700021, Highway Realignment Case No. 200900001 and Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 060922.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The project proposes to amend the Los Angeles County Master Plan of Highways to delete Cruzan Mesa Road (proposed Limited Secondary Highway), and realign Whites Canyon Road as Skyline Ranch Road (proposed Secondary Highway) from Whites Canyon Road/Plum Canyon Road to Sierra Highway. The deletion of Cruzan Mesa will avoid future potential impacts to the proposed Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools Significant Ecological Area (“SEA”). The redesignation of Whites Canyon Road from a Major Highway to a Secondary Highway will be compatible with the surrounding developments. The realignment of Whites Canyon Road, to be renamed Skyline Ranch Road, will increase connectivity between Sierra Highway and Whites Canyon Road.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The proposed project promotes the following Strategic Plan Goals:

Community and Municipal Services

The project provides approximately 1,770 acres (approximately 81 percent) of open space within large open space lots, one public park and private park lots. The creation of open space lots will protect valuable biological resources within the project. The proposed Cruzan Mesa Vernal Pools SEA located near underlying Tract Map No. 44967 which recorded as Tract Map Nos. 49433, 49434, 49467 approved for 200 single-family lots, will be protected within open space Lot No. 1293. The approved Tract Map No. 44967 will also be processed as a merger and resubdivision for 200 single-family lots into open space. This lot is proposed to be dedicated to Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (“Parks and Recreation”). The public park will be developed by the applicant and conveyed to Parks and Recreation, and will provide a community gathering area, a children’s play area, group picnic areas, a basketball court, and ball field with plaza and bleachers among other amenities.

Public Safety

Through the collaboration of the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works and City of Santa Clarita (“City”), this project

proposes street sections that will allow for Skyline Ranch Road to be used safely by pedestrian, bike and vehicular traffic within the project's development.

In addition, project density from flood hazard and geologic hazard areas have been transferred to areas within the southern portion of the project site more appropriate for development.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Adoption of the proposed general plan amendment as well as the approval of the conditional use permits, oak tree permit, highway realignment, and vesting tentative tract map should not result in any new significant costs to the County, as the owner is bearing the full costs of new development and construction. The open space lots are propose to be financially maintained by onsite filming revenue collected and the creation of a Landscaping and Lighting Act District. No request for financing is being made.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

On September 16, 2009, the Commission conducted a public hearing on Conditional Use Permit Case No. 04-075, Oak Tree Permit Case No. 200700021, Highway Realignment Case No. 200900001 and Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 060922. A continuance was recommended by staff due to technical holds still outstanding for the project. Outstanding holds included clearance through Los Angeles County Subdivision Committee, required review by the Los Angeles County Interdepartmental Engineering Committee ("IEC"), and the filing of a General Plan Amendment to update the Master Plan of Highways for the proposed Skyline Ranch Road. Issues raised included water availability and how this project may be affected by concurrent hearings on One Valley One Vision ("OVOV"). The Commission requested staff to return with technical issues addressed, and continued the public hearing to December 16, 2009.

On December 16, 2009, the Commission conducted a continued public hearing on all permits previously heard with the addition of General Plan Amendment Case No. 200900009 and Conditional Use Permit Case No. 200900121. Remaining issues included ongoing discussions with the City and County for street designs to Skyline Ranch Road and the project's request for the alternate cross-section for local streets. It was noted that the project's Draft EIR provides the most up-to-date information regarding water supply and that the Castaic Lake Water Agency, which commented on OVOV's EIR, made no comments regarding this project's EIR. The Commission also noted that while the project was well designed and has shown to have an adequate water supply, there is a general concern regarding water supply and large subdivisions.

Subsequent to the December 16, 2009 public hearing, IEC conducted a duly-noticed meeting to discuss the highway realignment and IEC indicated their recommendation for approval of the highway realignment, County and City staff also met with the applicant to discuss proposed street improvements to Skyline Ranch Road. A general consensus was reached regarding a modified cross-section for proposed Secondary Highway Skyline Ranch Road, including two travel lanes (one in each direction), a 14-foot wide landscaped median, and Class II bike lane in each direction.

On March 3, 2010 a continued public hearing was held. To address the last outstanding hold staff recommended an alternate condition to require proof of easements prior to the public hearing by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors ("Board"), to which the applicant agreed. The Commission discussed the history of filming activity near the vernal pools, the type of fencing in place around the vernal pools, the maintenance of the large open space located on the north portion of the project, and whether utilities will be provided to the elementary school lot. The applicant noted that the large natural open space is intended to go to a public agency and that Parks and Recreation has indicated their intent to accept this open space. The applicant also indicated that utilities will be provided on the elementary school lot and that they will be providing full funding for the construction of the school site. The March 3, 2010 public hearing was continued to March 24, 2010 for final documents to be prepared.

During the March 24, 2010 public hearing, discussion continued regarding open space maintenance and a funding mechanism for Parks and Recreation. It was agreed that prior to the public hearing before the Board, additional condition/mitigation language be further developed. The Commission closed the public hearing and approved the Conditional Use Permits, Oak Tree Permit, Highway Realignment and Vesting Tentative Tract Map, and recommended the General Plan Amendment for approval.

Pursuant to subsection C of Section 21.56.010 and subsection B.2 of Section 22.60.230 of the Los Angeles County Code ("County Code"), the CUPs, Oak Tree Permit, Highway Realignment and Vesting Tentative Tract Map are deemed to be called for review/appealed by your Board and shall be considered concurrently with the General Plan Amendment. A public hearing is required pursuant to Sections 22.16.200 and 22.60.240 of the County Code and Sections 65856 and 66452.5 of the Government Code. Notice of the hearing must be given pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section 22.60.174 of the County Code. These procedures exceed the minimum standards of Government Code Sections 6061, 65090 and 65856 relating to notice of public hearing.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

An Initial Study was prepared for this project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et.seq.), the State CEQA

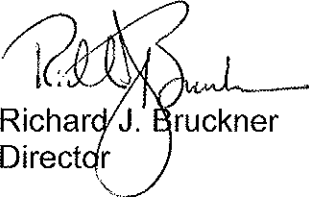
Guidelines, and the environmental document reporting procedures and guidelines of the County of Los Angeles. In accordance with State and County Environmental Quality guidelines, a Draft and Final Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") was prepared for the project. The EIR concludes that certain impacts cannot be mitigated to less than significant, which include: visual qualities, traffic/access, noise, air quality, solid waste disposal, law enforcement services, and global climate change. The Findings of Fact and SOC have been prepared in response to Final EIR comments regarding the seven factors that cannot be mitigated to less than significant. An MMP was also prepared to mitigate other potentially significant impacts to less than significant.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES OR PROJECTS

Action on the proposed General Plan Amendment, Conditional Use Permits, Oak Tree Permit, Highway Realignment and Vesting Tentative Tract Map is not anticipated to have a negative impact on current services as the project will construct adequate infrastructure to serve the project and through payment of connection, service, and annexation fees it will cover its fair share to develop new infrastructure as determined to be necessary in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING



Richard J. Bruckner
Director

RJB:SMT:ACB

Attachments: Commission Resolution, Findings and Conditions; Commission Staff Reports and Correspondence; Vesting Tentative Tract Map, Exhibit "A"; EIR and Mitigation Monitoring Program

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Clerk of the Board
Assessor
Director, Department of Public Works
Director, Department of Regional Planning